

REPORT

DATE: May 5, 2005

TO: Regional Council

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SUBJECT: Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) Expedited Project Selection Procedures

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S APPROVAL:

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve the attached RTIP Expedited Project Selection Procedure.

BACKGROUND: The Southern California Association of Governments RTIP staff worked with the County Transportation Commissions and the Imperial Valley Association of Governments through the RTIP meetings and with the transit operators in developing RTIP Expedited Project Selection Procedures.

The expedited project selection procedures are permissible under Federal regulations and basically allow projects from the second and third year of the RTIP to move forward.

23 CFR 450.332 states:

"If the State or transit operator wishes to proceed with a project in the second or third year of the TIP, the specific project selection procedures stated in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section must be used unless the MPO, State and transit operator jointly develop expedited project selection procedures to provide for the advancement of projects from the second or third year of the TIP".

These procedures will allow projects to move from the second or third year of the approved RTIP into the first year without an RTIP amendment. The programming of carryover Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funds is not allowed. The county transportation commissions and Imperial Valley Association of Governments programming limits are constrained by fiscal year apportionment for CMAQ and RSTP funds.

In addition, the procedures will allow the SCAG region to take advantage of additional obligational authority for RSTP or CMAQ and other federal funds that may become available on June 1 of each year. For example if another Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in California is unable to obligate all of its RSTP or CMAQ funds during the fiscal year, and the SCAG region has projects programmed in the second and third year of the RTIP that can be delivered, funding could be secured and the projects advanced.

There are three basic steps to the procedure and are as follow:

- Step 1 County Transportation Commissions and Imperial Valley Association of Governments develops a listing of project to be advanced and submits a county TIP revision to SCAG.

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- Step 2 SCAG analyzes and approves the county TIP revision and updates the RTIP.
- Step 3 County Transportation Commissions and Imperial Valley Association of Governments
Work with Caltrans to obligated state/federal funds in accordance with revisions.

These procedures require Caltrans approval. In discussions with Caltrans staff they indicate that upon approval by the SCAG Regional Council they will promptly review and approve the procedures so that they are in place by June 1.

In conclusion, the RTIP Expedited Project Selection Procedures are a tool in which to advance and expeditiously implement projects in the SCAG region.

FISCAL IMPACT: No direct impacts to SCAG, significant benefit to the SCAG region in advancing project delivery and obligating federal funds.

Regional Transportation Improvement Program Expedited Project Selection Procedures

County Transportation Commissions and Expedited Project Selection Procedures

Under State law (AB 1246), the County Transportation Commissions (CTCs- Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Orange County Transportation Authority, San Bernardino Associated Governments, Riverside County Transportation Commission, Ventura County Transportation Commission, and Imperial Valley Association of Governments) are responsible for developing the county transportation improvement programs for submittal to SCAG. SCAG in turn prepares the RTIP using the county TIPs.

SCAG publishes the RTIP guidelines at the beginning of each RTIP cycle and outlines all federal, state, and MPO requirements to facilitate the development of the county TIPs.

SCAG analyzes all of the county TIP projects for consistency with the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and for financial constraint. SCAG incorporates the eligible projects into the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) for conformity analysis. Projects that are not consistent with the federal and MPO requirements are not incorporated into the RTIP.

Should conflicts arise, they are worked out with the CTCs, SCAG's Regional Council and the Regional Transportation Agencies Coalition (RTAC). If a project should fall out, then SCAG coordinates with the CTCs to replace it. The Transportation Conformity Working Group also serves as a mechanism for interagency consultation for TIP issues between staff representatives from SCAG, the CTCs, Caltrans, and federal and state agencies.

Project Programming

Once the CTCs and the Imperial Valley Association of Governments (IVAG) have programmed funds to projects, as required by state and federal statutes, projects are then included in the RTIP in accordance with the estimated project delivery schedules. The first three years of the RTIP are required to be financially constrained, and programming beyond this period is for planning purposes only.

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| Step 1 | The CTC's/IVAG have established that projects programmed in the first three years are priority projects for the region and are programmed according to estimated project delivery schedules at the time of the TIP submittal. SCAG incorporates the county TIPs into the Regional TIP as submitted by the CTCs/IVAG in accordance with the appropriate transportation conformity and RTP consistency requirements. |
| Step 2 | SCAG performs all required conformity and consistency analysis and public hearings on the RTIP and adopts the RTIP. |
| Step 3 | SCAG submits the RTIP to the Governor (Caltrans) for incorporation into the State's Federal TIP, and SCAG simultaneously submits the conformity findings to the FHWA, FTA, and EPA for the final conformity determination. |

Regional Transportation Improvement Program Expedited Project Selection Procedures

Expedited Project Selection Procedures

23CFR450.332

“If the State or transit operator wishes to proceed with a project in the second or third year of the TIP, the specific project selection procedures stated in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section must be used unless the MPO, State and transit operator jointly develop expedited project selection procedures to provide for the advancement of projects from the second or third year of the TIP”

In order to address the above regulation the SCAG regions (SCAG, County Transportation Commissions (CTCs), Imperial Valley Association of Governments (IVAG) and transit operators) developed and agree to the following expedited project selection procedures.

Projects programmed within the first three years may be advanced to accommodate project schedules that have proceeded more rapidly than estimated. This advancement allows project sponsors the flexibility to deliver and obligate state and/or federal funds in a timely and efficient manner. Nevertheless, non-TCM projects can only advance ahead of TCM projects if they do not cause TCM projects to be delayed.

- Step 1 County Transportation Commissions and Imperial Valley Association of Governments develops a listing of project to be advanced and submits a county TIP revision to SCAG.
- Step 2 SCAG analyzes and approves the county TIP revision and updates the RTIP.
- Step 3 County Transportation Commissions and Imperial Valley Association of Governments Work with Caltrans to obligate state/federal funds in accordance with revisions.